
Subject: Informational Materials on Guyana

@SenRubioPress

<https://twitter.com/senrubiopress/status/1179092069928837121?s=12>

Today

US-UK-EU joint statement on elections

<https://gy.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-guyana-elections-date/>

Sept 27

Jagdeo: PPP will not be blackmailed, will not return to Parliament

Sept. 25

<https://newsroom.gy/2019/09/25/jagdeo-ppp-will-not-be-blackmailed-will-not-return-to-parliament/>

Statement from the Commonwealth Secretary-General on Guyana

Sept. 23

<https://thecommonwealth.org/media/news/statement-commonwealth-secretary-general-guyana>

Guyana News: Jagdeo says Granger will see protests until election date named Jagdeo says Granger will see protests until election date named

Sept. 20

<https://www.stabroeknews.com/2019/09/20/news/guyana/jagdeo-says-granger-will-see-protests-until-election-date-named/>

Jagdeo accepts GECOM February 2020 elections timeline

Sept. 20

<http://guyanachronicle.com/2019/09/20/jagdeo-accepts-gecom-february-2020-elections-timeline>

Reuters: Diplomats declare Guyana government in breach of constitution as first oil looms

Sept. 19

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-guyana-politics-idUSKBN1W42OG>

Forbes: Exxon Announces Another Big Find As Guyana Elections Approach

Sept. 18

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidblackmon/2019/09/18/exxon-announces-another-big-find-as-guyana-elections-approach/#7e663e8d78b2>

From December:

AP: [Guyana government falls in no-confidence vote](#)

Reuters: [Guyanese parliament brings down government, triggering elections](#)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-guyana-politics/guyanese-parliament-brings-down-government-triggering-elections-idUSKCN1OL0LR>

NYT: [Guyana's Government Falls in No-Confidence Vote](#)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/22/world/americas/guyana-government-falls.html>

About Guyana:

Through 2015, Guyana was a poor but stable country that enjoyed economic growth and declining poverty. However, that progress was built on emerging democratic ideals, a fragile economy and underlying ethnic tensions between the Afro- and Indo-Guyanese communities.

Under the leadership of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Presidents Cheddi Jagan (1992-1997), Bharrat Jagdeo (1999-2011), and Donald Ramotar (2011-2015) instituted key market reforms that accelerated economic growth and spurred foreign direct investment in the country. ExxonMobil's recent discovery of major oil deposits off the coast of Guyana is expected to account for 40% of the country's GDP. Soon one of the poorest countries in South America could be the richest on a per capita basis.

However, the current constitutional crisis now threatens the future of 750,000 Guyanese.

In 2015, David Granger of the APNU (A Partnership for National Unity) party was elected President. Then in November 2018, the PPP made major gains in nation-wide local elections. A month later, Parliament passed a vote of no confidence (33-32), which under Guyana's constitution should have triggered presidential and parliamentary elections within 90 days, or March 21, 2019.

In violation of the constitution and ignoring rulings from Guyana's highest court, the Trinidad-based Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), President Granger implemented discredited and illegal stalling tactics and refused to call for new elections until forced by the international community.

On September 30, he finally called for elections to be held on March 2, 2020 – nearly 15 months following the no-confidence vote that triggered them and a year after they were required under the constitution.

Timeline:

- November 2018 — Local elections are held where PPP makes major gains throughout the country.
- December 2018 — Parliament passes a vote of no confidence (33-32).
- January 2019 — Granger mounts court challenge on technicalities of the vote.
- February 2019 — Guyana's independent elections body, known as GECOM, announces it is unable to meet the 90-day constitutionally-mandated deadline for new elections.
- March 2019 — Granger calls for the creation of a new registry of voters in the country.
- March 2019 — GECOCM announces elections cannot be held until it completes its house-to-house registration process.
- June 2019 — CCJ validates the vote of no confidence and mandates elections must occur within 90 days of its ruling.
- June 2019 — The chairman of GECOM steps down.
- July 2019 — Granger and Jagdeo agree on a new elections chair.
- September 19 — GECOM chair says elections it would be ready to hold elections by the end of February.
- September 19 — Ambassadors for the U.S., UK and European Union release a joint statement noting the government is in breach of the constitution and calling on President Granger to set an election date immediately or possibly face a cutoff of development funding (the U.S. provides \$4.5 million to Guyana for HIV/AIDS, education and health funding).

- September 30 — Granger officially sets March 2, 2020 as the date for elections, almost one year after what the constitution required.

Election Issues:

- The APNU has a history of rigging elections over the years and may be trying to do it again.
- The APNU will never hold free and fair elections without international pressure and international election observers.

U.S. Interests:

- Guyana borders Venezuela and Granger's refusal to uphold the rule of law threatens to further destabilize the region and erode U.S. efforts to promote democracy in the region.
- Such instability would threaten U.S. strategic and economic interests, i.e., ExxonMobil's discovery of over 6 billion barrels of oil and gas offshore to begin production early next year.
- There are approximately 270,000 Guyanese living in the U.S.; violence and instability in Guyana will force Guyanese to emigrate and join families in the U.S.
- Cuba has shown interest in deepening its relationship with the government of Guyana, potentially to offset the effects of the U.S. embargo and the decline in oil shipments from Venezuela.
- President Granger is close to Cuba, which has provided him free cancer treatment since the end of 2018
- Guyana is a poor country, but its newfound oil wealth could bring increased corruption, drug and people trafficking that affects U.S. interests if a lawful environment is not established and supported.

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U.S. Embassy in Guyana

Joint Statement – Guyana Elections

JOINT STATEMENT

The United States of America Ambassador to Guyana, H.E. Ambassador Sarah-Ann Lynch, United Kingdom High Commissioner to Guyana, H.E. Greg Quinn and the European Union Ambassador to Guyana, H.E. Ambassador Fernando Ponz Cantó joint statement on the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) proposed elections timeframe.

“The United States, United Kingdom and the European Union thank the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) for devising a proposed elections timeframe for conducting General and Regional Elections.

However, we deeply regret that, by surpassing September 18, the Government is currently in breach of the Constitution following its failure to adhere to the decisions of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) on 18 June and its subsequent orders.

This situation comes at great cost to the people of Guyana. The prevailing political uncertainty undermines Guyanese institutions, compromises economic opportunities and delays development across all areas including infrastructure, education, health, and social services. It also hinders our ability to support Guyana’s development needs.

We therefore call upon the President to set an elections date immediately in full compliance with Guyana’s constitution.”

19 September 2019

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